# Health Secretary pledges to enhance UK maternity services following critical report on birth trauma



Health Secretary Victoria Atkins has committed to developing a national strategy to enhance maternity services in the UK. This decision follows a critical parliamentary report on birth trauma, led by MPs Theo Clarke and Rosie Duffield, which highlighted significant shortcomings in the current system, including poor care often being disregarded as normal and women frequently feeling mistreated. The extensive inquiry gathered evidence from over 1,300 individuals and resulted in multiple recommendations aimed at improving care quality.

Key recommendations include increasing recruitment and retention of midwives, creating standardised postnatal services, extending the litigation time for medical negligence related to childbirth from three to five years, and ensuring separate health check-ups for mothers and babies at six weeks postpartum.

Atkins stated that, in collaboration with NHS England, a comprehensive strategy would address these issues and set clear standards and expectations for maternity care. This announcement was made at an address to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on birth trauma on Monday, where Atkins also expressed her commitment to advancing currently underway projects for maternity and neonatal services. Health Minister Maria Caulfield acknowledged existing shortcomings in maternity services and highlighted ongoing efforts to improve maternal health across England.